

elections. Therefore, I would like to work with the cosponsors of this bill on legislation soon after the elections in Ethiopia that would allow us to be more comprehensive and develop a legislative response that is consistent with the importance of this country in America's overall Africa policy.

Today, a number of colleagues joined me in sending a letter to Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, urging him to rescind the expulsion of three American NGOs helping to build democracy—the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems. For the sake of continuing democratic progress in Ethiopia, we hope the Prime Minister will respond positively to our request.

Again, Eritrea and Ethiopia are concentrating on building their military forces, and they are neglecting the very pressing needs of their people. Now their mutual militaries seem poised to renew open warfare due to unresolved issues involving their common border.

Both nations have increased their deployment of troops on the security zone border. Ethiopia recently added 30,000 troops for an estimated total of 90,000 armed men, most said to be within 40 kilometers of the frontier. While it is unclear exactly how many troops the Eritreans have deployed, they feel empowered to threaten military action if the current stalemate concerning the international border commission's ruling is not accepted fully by the Ethiopian government.

As recently as Tuesday of this week, Eritrean President Isaias announced at his ruling party conference that war with Ethiopia is imminent. President Isaias said his upcoming budget would be planned with war in mind. Presumably that budget will include funding for the arms the Eritreans agreed last month to buy from Russia.

If the war resumes, Ethiopia's Tekeze dam and Eritrea's port of Assab will be prime targets, which will only make worse an already precarious state of development in both nations.

It is difficult to understand why these formerly friendly nations would risk further devastation for territory not particularly blessed with natural resources. However, one must keep in mind that this border dispute actually dates back to the somewhat vague borders drawn by Italy, the former colonial power. So long as Eritrea and Ethiopia were united under colonial or dictatorial rule, the border issues were not pressing.

The peace process that eventually ended the war was predicated on an international commission impartially ruling on the demarcation of the 1000 kilometer border between the two countries. However, the decision of the commission has only been accepted "in principle" by the Ethiopians, who stand to lose their access to the Red Sea. The Ethiopian government is publicly complaining about loss of the town of Badme, hardly a strategic center. Meanwhile, the Eritreans refuse to even discuss the matter further.

U.S. policy should be clear on the Eritrea-Ethiopia dispute, but it appears to have depended on the old paradigm. We are supportive of both Eritrea and Ethiopia; however, issues such as the fight against global terrorism and the effort to contain Sudan's hostile government have caused American policy to tread lightly on development, democracy and human rights issues in those countries. We

should not have to choose between security and democracy and human rights. It is not an "either-or" situation but "both-and." We must find a new framework for U.S. policy in the Horn of Africa, and we called this hearing partly to see how the Administration is addressing the full range of our concerns in this region.

Both Eritrea and Ethiopia make themselves more vulnerable to internal turmoil by their inability to address the many other vital issues they face even if there is a stalemate in the border dispute. This is neither in the short term interest of these two nations nor in the long term strategic interest of the United States. Identifying a more effective policy toward resolving the Eritrea-Ethiopia dispute was the focus of today's hearing.

IN HONOR OF MR. GEORGE COUCH

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2005

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend George Couch for his tremendous commitment to education in general, and to the Latino youth of my district in particular. This coming Saturday, May 7, 2005, the San Benito County Mexican-American Committee on Education (MACE) will recognize George for his tremendous help in making educational opportunities available to young people in San Benito County.

George graduated from Stanford University and followed that up with an MBA from Harvard. He has used this education and his business smarts to build several successful companies in the Monterey Bay Area. These include Triad Broadcasting Company in Monterey which operates 49 broadcast radio properties nationwide, and Couch Distributing Company in Watsonville which has retail beverage customers throughout the region.

George is a lion of a man who cares deeply about righting wrongs. He does not seek out the limelight, but rather looks for quiet ways to make a big impact. That theme of making an impact and getting results underpins all of his community and philanthropic work. George serves as a Trustee of the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula Foundation; trustee of the Leon and Sylvia Panetta Institute for Public Policy; member of the Board of Directors of the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County; member of the Governing Board of Cabrillo College in Aptos; member of the Board of Governors of the State Bar of California; and member of the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz county Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

George Couch's work with MACE certainly follows this pattern of service. As an organization, MACE offers scholarships to Latino youth in San Benito County to further their education beyond high school. Over the years MACE has helped dozens of San Benito County students achieve their goals. The financial and moral support offered by MACE has been instrumental in their success. This achievement is in no small part due to the efforts of George Couch whose steadfast support and guidance of MACE over the last 19 years has played a central role.

Mr. Speaker, I know that I speak for the whole House when I congratulate Mr. Couch

on this well deserved recognition. His service stands as a beacon to others. I am pleased to have this opportunity to honor Mr. Couch and express the gratitude of MACE and the broader community for the results that flow from his selfless leadership.

TRIBUTE TO MARLA RUZICKA

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2005

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding young woman, Marla Ruzicka, who was tragically killed in Iraq on Saturday, April 16, 2005, when a suicide bomber attacked a convoy of U.S. security contractors passing her vehicle on the road to Baghdad airport. Marla was traveling on the road to visit an Iraqi child injured by a bomb, part of her daily work with the humanitarian organization she founded—The Campaign for Innocent Victims of Conflict (CIVIC). Marla, who was only 28 years old, worked tirelessly and fearlessly on behalf of civilian victims of war in some of the most dangerous parts of the world, accomplishing more in the area of human rights during her short life than most people do in a lifetime.

It is Marla Ruzicka's affiliation with Southampton College, an institution which I served as Provost for many years, that has made her tragic death very personal to me. Marla earned her undergraduate degree through Southampton College's Friends World Program, an academic program that stresses the careful consideration of world problems, and encourages a life of committed action in the world community. Many of my colleagues on the faculty and staff can recall Marla's passionate commitment to making a difference in the world, and were moved by her enthusiasm for helping those in need. To those of us who knew of Marla, it was no surprise that she gave up her life to serve the needs of others.

Marla's concern for the victims of world injustice began early in life. A Northern California native, Marla began her work as a human rights activist for the San Francisco office of Global Exchange at the young age of 15. It was at this time that Marla first demonstrated her desire to educate others about global injustice by organizing discussions for her high school classmates about such issues as the U.S. trade embargo on Cuba. During her undergraduate education, Marla traveled to the Middle East, Cuba, Zimbabwe, and Nicaragua where she witnessed firsthand the suffering of those who lived there. After earning her degree, she continued her work with Global Exchange and traveled to Afghanistan after Operation Enduring Freedom, where she recorded the military campaign's effects on Afghan civilians and used the information to garner assistance for the families harmed by the conflict.

In 2003, Marla organized her efforts in assisting the victims of war by founding an organization she named CIVIC—The Campaign for Innocent Victims of Conflict. Marla's assigned mission for CIVIC was both to achieve an accurate accounting of civilian casualties caused by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and to secure assistance for their families. In pursuing this mission, she spent weeks at a time